

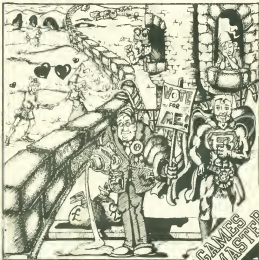
ISSUE 16

OCT — NOV

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FOR SAM COUPE & SPECTRUM



REVIEWED

**QUEST'S PRO-DOS COLLECTION**

**GAMES  
MASTER**

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## EDITORIAL

by D Ledbury

Reading a recent copy of Tim Kemp's adventure zine *From Beyond*, I noticed his plea for more response for the letters page, and other sections, from his readership. Tim stressed the fact that he wanted to hear more from the readers, to see he was doing the best job he could. This is a situation that I can well understand.

When I was in charge of the *Newsdisk*, SAMCO was regularly inundated with letters - not all praising, to be true - that offered opinions, advice and suggestions that went into my brain-bag for further *Newsdisk* features or ideas. In short, the readers opinions helped shape the *Newsdisk* - and by all accounts, it shaped it for the better.

Now we come to ZAT. For many issues now we haven't had a Letters page. Why? For one simple reason, we haven't had any letters from you! Please don't feel embarrassed about writing, we long to hear from all of you. If you have a point to make, a matter to raise, or even a particular gripe then PLEASE let us know about it!

It is tempting for us to rest on our laurels, but if we did that we would never evolve, which is not such a good thing, is it?

Issue 16 is only a sneeze or two away, and it marks the dawn of our 4th year of publication. Let's hear from you how we can make this birthday issue one to put everyone else's Birthday Issues to shame!

Before I shoot off, I'd like to thank YS for the great review, and the issue offer I'd also like to reassure Jan Pillor that my new spellchecker should help cure my bad spelling - I hope!

I regret to inform you that Mick Garbutt, who has been long associated with ZAT, and recently *Square One*, passed away on September 11th. Mick was a great supporter to the zines, he was witty, serious, and most of all a great friend to us all. He will be sorely missed. DB

# SOAPBOX

by Martin Schuster

As they used to say on Blue Peter (and still could, for all I know): "Hello there, and welcome to another of my Soapboxes. Winter is rapidly drawing closer and even though it is still officially hanging on the the term: "Summer", the weather has been bad enough for me to have had to light a fire, in the evenings sometimes. Yee, real fire - very HITEC, I don't think! Still, they are nice to sit in front of, toasting muffins and bread of an evening!

But enough of this idle chat, there's work ahead and this issue I shall turn my attention to adventure games.

Why, I wonder, are so many adventure games (the majority, even?) so illogical?

If I go through my front door I know where I am and where I am going. West, North, East again eventually brings me to my favourite watering hole, South, however, would take me to the bus station from where I can catch a bus to my girlfriend's home, whilst North will eventually take me to my parents.

But not so in the world of adventure gaming! As soon as you wake up, hey, are you ever in BIG trouble!!

If it's YOUR bedroom, why don't you KNOW where your -say money belt is hidden? [Just what kind of a party did you go to last night?~ Because, boy, whatever it was you were drinking gave you awful amnesia!

And once you leave your home, how

come you don't know the way to - say the local library? I mean, heck, it is your town!

Fairly detailed maps and lists should be provided as a matter of course.

Certainly, if you are an explorer on an uncharted planet or have suddenly bombed down a hole in the High Street just outside "Woolies" and discovered a hitherto unknown underground city, a lack of a map is understandable and a sensible part of the game.

Deb: "Dope, you have just stepped into a goldfish pond in your garden that you forgot you had." Well, silly old amnesia me. I'd be more careful of where I was going...If I knew where I was going. Silly, isn't it? But isn't that what REALLY happen in most adventure games, from home produced efforts to full priced things like *Hampstead*, for example?

In the supposedly realistic games set "now", we seem to have game players depicted as some sort of zombified amnesiae from hell, mentally or wondrously staggering down the High Street careering from shop to shop and building to building. This really is not on as each lack of planning does tend to spoil the gameplay of what could be superb adventures.

There do also tend to be silly errors in some adventures which make me wonder if those producing them ever bothered to properly test the generation system that they are using or the game itself. For example, if the computer tells you that it can see a bottle on the table, why, when you input: "Get bottle" does it say: "I can see no bottle!" Why? what is wrong with it? Is it insane, stupid or drunk? No, just poorly programmed.

Another example of the all too obvious

lack of Beta testing was seen a few years ago when a game described a "small book". You had to pick it up and examine it before you discovered that it was your own passport! Gosh And there was me thinking Mr Magon was short-sighted!!

There is a software house which, to spare my feelings, we shall refer to as: "Adelaide Hissler" and used a very clever adventure game generating system. The games produced as it were very good...except when you got to the same part of the game which always caused a system reset!

The problem with mapping out the like seems to stem from the fact that computer adventures originally grew out of the Dungeons and Dragons craze in which only the Games Master knows where everything is and what's going to happen. Instead of striking out on their own and using their computers to the fullest of their capabilities and producing some amazing adventure software, all too many of them decided to follow all too slavishly the rules and concepts of a games system that was not really designed with the computer in mind.

And the problem of poor testing of programs or games creation systems which are seriously flawed? That is, as the article mentions made clear, a matter wholly in the hands of those who design the programs.

Am I an expert on computer adventure games? No more than the average home or business computer user. But before anyone is critical of me on this point let me observe that although one does not have to be an expert on car design, it is very easy for the average car user or owner to spot that the seal on the windscreen is leaking or that the car is using too much petrol to the mile.

That is it for this Soapbox, I do hope to be running a special Soapbox next time on the future of the Sam Corps and Team Sam which is still alive and kicking. I'd love to hear your views on this, especially if you are a contributor to ZAT and/or a member of Team Sam, so PLEASE let me have YOUR views as soon as possible to the NEW ZAT ADDRESS which is:

33 Dawley Bank, Dawley, Telford TF4 2LQ

Thanks for reading this Soapbox and making it the success that it is. Be seeing you!

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During the mid Eighties, there was a modem boom. Everyone who was anyone (and could afford it) had their computer 'hooked up' to a modem.

The prime use of a modem was to connect your computer, from even a 'humble' ZX81 to the 'mighty' Commodore 64, to Mircronet. Mircronet could be described rather like a cross between CEEFAX, 'Your Computer' magazine, and an OMSD chatline. The features were endless, including news, letters, free games and utilities, technical sections, machine user groups and communication to users all over the country, as well as Prestel access (a VERY upmarket CEEFAX) which featured news, sport, weather, travel, and lots of services and information. All this for a local phone call and extra charges depending on what services you used.

[Commodore users also had access to a Mircronet styled system called Computel. Computel was fairly similar to Mircronet, but did have a bad reputation for being mis-used by pranks. DL.]

Sadly, Mircronet (owned by BT) was plagued by usual faults. The chatline was 3p per minute. Customer services were sometimes poor and eventually they began to ditch 8 bit computers and favour Amigas and PCs (What's new?). When this happened, dedicated hobbyists began to create a smaller, friendlier alternative to Mircronet. These small systems were called Bulletin Boards or BB's for short. Anyone with a compatible modem could dial up and get

connected to the services available, like Mircronet but on a more down to earth level. The computers running BBs were just simple machines like Spectrums and BBC's (which was the most compatible) with disc drives or microdrives.

The Spectrum entry into the commo world was via three modems. The first and most popular was the PRISM VTX 5000 by OEL. It retailed at £99.99 in the mid 80's and won the BMA Peripheral of the Year award. Now they are available for about £10-£15. Don't pay £25 from a second hand shop [I actually paid £35.00 for mine, and I've only ever used it once! Anyone want to buy a used modem? DL] or an ad in the glossies. Buy them from IG SERVICES who sells them brand new. The other was was to buy a GEC Datachat 1223 or VTX711 which were not as user friendly but could work at different speeds.

Modems work by converting computer signals to pulses, sending them down the phone lines, then converting them back again. Modem stands for MOdulator DEModulator which means code to audio and decode to signals again. Each modem has its own speed it transmits and receives data at. This is measured in BAUD or Bits Per Second. The VTX5000 had a speed of 1200/75 which meant it could transmit 1200 bits per second (150 bytes or 1k every 6 seconds) and receive at 75 baud (roughly the speed your eye reads text like this). Speed 1200 is average, but 75 is quite slow. It is possible to alter this speed, but takes major adjustments to the modem. BBCs run at 300/300. PCs and Amigas and good modems run at 2400/2400 and are capable of variable speeds.

Now, there are two different methods of displaying the data received. The nicest and most popular was is called VIEWDATA and is the way CeeFax and Oracle are viewed (BBC mode? 40 column text with block graphics). When

the page is filled up, after a keypress it will be overwritten by a new page. The other way is called SCROLLING or SCROLLY as its more affectionately known. The text is black and white and is usually 64 or 80 column (rather like Teaword 2) and the information scrolls up the screen. The VTX is fitted to receive viewdata as standard, but other programs are available to allow it to receive scrolly. Note: These two systems are NOT compatible and a viewdata set modem will not receive scrolly information.

Macronet has now closed down, but a new service, called Silicon Village has emerged. It's designed like an actual village and has simple graphics depicting each area. It includes a newsgroups, featuring daily computing and TV magazines, computer areas, multi user adventure games, special clubs, like adventure helpline, adults only, electronic gay bar, and church, places to meet and talk to other users, chatlines and mailbox utility. Sadly, cost bars a lot of users. Registration is £10. Subscription is £6 per month and costs of 3p per minute AND your local phone call cost.

This is why bulletin boards are so popular, but unfortunately you may have to dial nationally to access one.

The comma scene is complex to start with, but after a short time, you soon get used to all the terminology and how to log on. If you like a good mix of humour and technical material, then log onto a BB today, especially to ask for help, get free games or have a chat with someone. I'll leave you with some contact numbers and addresses. For more information or how to actually 'log on' to a Bulletin Board, then see this issues MEAN BIZ or drop me a line at the Alchemist Research address below. We can even talk directly to each other or swap programs via our modems!

For Modems:  
BQ SERVICES  
64 ROEBUCK ROAD, CHESSINGTON,  
SURREY KT9 1JX  
Tel:088 309 0263

For Comma Software and Info:  
ALCHEMIST PO  
ALCHEMIST RESEARCH  
62 TITHE BARN LANE,  
WOODHOUSE,  
SHEFFIELD, S13 7LN

Press: DEMO LINE (FREE)  
0742 697644 (you can get a local number from the information section)

Bulletin Boards:  
vaViewdata vscrolly

LIVERPOOL POST: 051 428 8924  
GNOME AT HOME: 081 888 8894  
CABB: 081 773 0408  
PHANTOM: 0226 340425  
CRYSTAL TOWER: 081 886 2813  
SPECS: 0772 624632  
ASPECTS: 061 792 0260

INFOTEL (Alch. Res. Recommended)  
0737 766027 scrolly  
or talk to a human (Dave Gorski) on  
0737 761911

You can get lots of other contact numbers from this one, especially for Spectrums etc.

D-TEL (Spectrum- currently undergoing revamping):  
DAVE WALKER  
7 DINSDALE CLOSE  
MIDDLETON ST GEORGE  
Nr DARLINGTON  
DL2 1DY

If any ZAT readers are already involved in 'comma', please feel free to write in to us about your interests. Just address your letter to the NEW address for ZAT.



# MINDGAMES

by JOSEPH CRAWFORD

This issue, we'll be featuring a review of the first ProDOS Adventure compilation from our very own David Ludhary's Quest Software. These titles have been reviewed by both myself, and by Daniel Cannes. (Daniel reviewed Aunt Valma and Desmond and Gertrude.)

Now, as this is David's compilation, we've been as objective as possible with the review. Likewise, some of the gripes I've mentioned may have been due to these being the pre-release versions of the titles, and could well have been fixed by the time you buy it. So, without further delay, let's review the titles on this disk...

## Corya - the Warrior Sage (By Tony Collins)

"First there was a legend...of warrior...of a man...of Corya the Warrior Sage" as the introduction goes. Reflecting on this, it would appear that Corya is a Cosen, the Barbarian character; he is in fact one of the Illusion Warrior-Sages, who are skilled in both the mystic and fighting arts, and who seldom leave the sanctity of their temple. But if you examine his broken sword then Corya still makes one pretty mean fighting machine. He can cast all sorts of powerful spells: REAL, CHERISH, SHIELD, FIRE which are all self explanatory with the exception of the CHERISH spell, which is designed to calm any potential attackers.

The plot goes something like this.

One day, Corya enters the village of Ernsel to find it completely destroyed by a fire. He visits the meeting hall where the village folk are assembled and he is attacked by a terrified mob. With a little action Corya wins them over and is welcomed by the speaker. He tells you that the village is plagued by a Dragon, and he requests your services to hunt and kill it, in true hero style. Corya obliges. He is told that the Dragon lies to the east, in the mountains of Calthas-in-Sathin beyond the Great Forest. He is also given a bit of advice "seek aid men of the forest" and with these final words, Corya begins his journey. He has a problem though, his sword desperately needs mending and the blacksmith hasn't been seen in a long while.

The game is split into two parts, and should be loaded after you have completed the first part. Interestingly enough, you can load the second part without having completed the first part. But that's pretty hard to start without finishing the first part!!

I found the game extremely challenging and enjoyable. The detail paid to descriptions is excellent, especially when you choose to examine something. The atmosphere of the game is brilliant too. I recommend this game to all adventure fans, and I think this will appeal particularly to beginners.



because it is as simple to follow. The difficulty level is about right, too. However, the parser is average and suffers from not having a VOCAB listing, which will get annoying when you try to do a complex procedure.

Overall - 90%

### Teacher Trouble (By Tony Collins)

In Teacher Trouble you play Ernie, a pupil, who attends a school which is lacking in every department (get it?). The "goodie" teachers have been locked up and have been replaced by "badde" teachers. The "badde"s, unknown to our hero, are in fact bored alienist! They plan to brainwash all the kids, and make them as thick as they are! As Ernie, it is your aim to get rid of the "badde" teachers and free the "goodie" teachers. In this Ernie is not without help, his fellow pupil Gillen will help out when needed and he'll agree to follow you if you ask. However, when you need him most he'll refuse to help you. Same materal!

As expected the game is set in a school. However during your lunch hour you are allowed out and can visit the nearby shops for any bits and pieces you may need. The time limit comes into play here, if you decide to extend your stay then rest assured the secretary will be after you. The time limit is based on a school day, and you have one school day in which to complete the game. The day begins at 9.00am and ends at 5.00pm, with every action taking two minutes.

Although the difficulty level is very high the game itself is a good one. It has lots of extra commands, many of which are shortened. For example, "Examine" is not just shortened to

"Exam". It is shortened to "X". The atmosphere of the game lacks in interest, and becomes child-like. The difficulty level puts you off slightly, and I don't think this game will appeal to the beginner. It also features some classic spelling mistakes, which are definitely not INTERESTING!

Overall 80%

### Desmond and Gertrude (By Scott Denyer)

Desmond and Gertrude tells the tragic story of love between a beautiful princess and a peasant. However the mean tyrant of a king doesn't allow his beautiful daughter to marry any old scum, so he builds a wall across the village to separate the two, and throws her in her bedroom (filled with security camera). By carrier pigeons (yes this is the plot!) they arrange to meet together by the secret cave. At this point that the game starts.

You can choose to play either Desmond or Gertrude at the beginning, and you must guide their way to this secret cave. The first problem, if you are playing Gertrude, is getting out of the castle (Des has no such problem, he lives at the end of a gutter). Luckily this isn't too difficult, but later on in the game it is possible to get very stuck unless you carefully read the few clues given in the location descriptions. [Clue: hygiene can be VERY useful]

On top of that there is the wretched wall which prevents objects being used to solve puzzles on the other side of the wall. A challenge but often suffers from grinding to a halt. Overall 75%.

Aunt Valma's Coming to Tea



(By Scott Denyer)

Aunt Valma's Coming to Tea is an entirely different game. It is the birthday of your dreaded Aunt Valma and she, funny enough, is coming to tea.

Fully prepared, you have bought her a suitable birthday present and (this is where the plot gets slightly racy) locked it in the cupboard to keep it safe. However, you discover that you have lost the key, and it is only an hour and a half until she arrives. And the fuses have blown, so you can't see into the dark corners of rooms. There are only 1 and a half hours (about 170 moves) before death rings the doorbell so this game has a fairly tight time limit.

Most of the puzzles are in the form finding an object or two and using it in the right way to get another object for another puzzle. The first job is to fix the fuses, but the garage is locked and a rattler dog is guarding the finished.

All in all this isn't a very taxing game, but it has its moments, and is a good introduction to adventures if you've never played one before.

Overall 70%

Overall, I would say that the pack represents excellent value for money. Aunt Valma and Desmond are two well known pieces of software and, like many titles from the well-known Bulburt The Hamster Software, have a good reputation. To find them as a pack with two other very good games from Tony Collins' Gold Software is surely a pack worth buying. For those who missed Aunt Valma and Desmond, and beginners alike, this pack is definitely worth the money.

One complaint I will make is the presentation of the games. The white,

made 3 size characters, are set on a blue background which is definitely an eye-streeler. With all points taken into consideration I can only come up with one final conclusion: buy it.

A few notes from David...

A very nice review of the games!

Joseph mentioned about the "made 3 size characters" and the colour scheme. As you probably know, the character size is down to ProDOS itself, and I can't do a thing about it! However, I have included the PALETTE system file on the disk, to make changing the colour to a more suitable one as easy as with SAM BASIC. Besides which, I find the font very easy to read on my black and white telly!

Aunt Valma was originally included as a "freebie" with the Spectrum version of Desmond and Gertrude, but as it is such a nice little introduction game, I felt obliged to include it in this game. This, like all the others in the QUEST/PAC (Quest ProDOS Adventure Compilation) series, was an Amstrad CP/M game, converted to run on ProDOS. (Although the original version was converted from the Spectrum.)

Back to Joseph...

Thanks for these few words of wisdom! The compilation is normally priced at £5.50, although it is currently available at the special introductory price of £3.99 - if you get it quickly! It is available from QUEST SOFTWARE, 5 Beacon Field, Kings Rye Road, Wellingdon TF1 1NG. Cheques made payable to D.Ledbury. The special price ends at the end of November.

Further compilations will include titles from River Software, and Kee Beed. Titles include: The Mixer, The Bee, Spire Legacy, and many more.

On the subject of CP/M, David has been sent details of an American firm that specialises in a large range of CP/M software, and this included a nice collection of Infocom titles! At the moment, David has one of the few SAM's equipped with it's own Infocom game: *Nightmare Gold's To The Galaxy* (although he is stuck with the probability drive on the Heart of Gold's deck!), and this piece of woe may stop him from gleeting about it!

We've also heard that ZAT reader Sarah Pitchford has managed to get an Amstrad CP/M Infocom title running on the Spectrum +3, so this firm may be useful for the Spectrum too!

More news as we get it - although you can be prepared to pay about 20-30 pounds for one of these titles.

Next issue, we hope to feature some Spectrum titles from Jon Lazen's Compass Software label - which David has won a lifetime supply of games from in a recent *Beyond* competition! For your chance to win a copy of either *QUEST/PAC 1* or the forthcoming Spectrum *Delbert The Monster* Compilation: "Delbert's +0 Disk Delights", just answer these difficult questions....

1. What sequence of commands allows you to escape the Goblin's dungeon in "The Boggit"?
2. What was the name of the programmer of "The Boggit" - or of his programming team?
3. What well known book was the Boggit based on, and who wrote it?

Answers to the NEM address: 33 Dawley Bank, Dawley, Telford, Shrops. TF4 2LQ. Please get them to us before the end of November!

As you'll probably have read elsewhere, ZAT is planning another new magazine, to be launched later this year, called *TH!*

This mag - whose name actually stands for "Tips N Tactics" - will be designed to provide hints and tips, for both playing and programming *Adventures* (it) also be a slight departure for the ZAT team as it will actually be for ALL computers for a change! If you would be interested in taking an active role in this magazine, please drop Darren or David a line at the above address.

News of another release from Quest has reached me - programmed by Sarah Pitchford (yes, him again!), of Microfair Madness fame. Aptly, it is in fact *Microfair Madness* - or more to the point, the enhanced SAM version! No release date yet, but it looks to be previewed at the *Adventurer's* Convention, and on *SAM PRIME 2*. (For more details on *SAM PRIME* - see the News section.)

One more piece of *Adventuring* News that has just arrived... Jon Lazen of Compass Software has now bought a SAM! More to the point, he is now releasing a range of "hybrid" SAM titles. For further details, drop Jon a line at:

Compass Software  
111 Mill Road  
Cobholm Island  
Gt Yarmouth  
NR31 0BB

That's all for this issue's Mind Games, but if you'd like to review any *Adventures* you've really enjoyed, or would like to supply any news items, then please feel free to get in touch.

Till next time, Joseph Crawford

## CEASED TRADING

By Richard Swann

"Once upon a time there was a software house it produced wonderful games for the Spectrum, before suddenly, to everyone's surprise, it ran out of money, called in the receivers, and quickly went out of sight."

The above description could apply to any number of software houses. Since the advent of the Spectrum there have been a huge amount of software companies that either ceased trading or were bought out by bigger software companies, many of which produced some incredibly popular games while they were around.

The question has to be asked then, if they produced top quality software, why aren't they around now?

First of all that's the fact that it's all very well producing one hit game but when you've done it once, you've got to do it again and again and again. One hit game doesn't sell forever and it's a software house's job to ensure the games come rolling out. One good example of this is Software Projects, who produced a fair crop of games before releasing the classic Jet Set Willy games, and then pretty much disappearing. I haven't got any information about Software Projects going into receivership, but I think it's safe to assume that they just wound down and stopped (they seem to have but apparently the Amiga version of JSW has just appeared from "a" Software Projects so this may not be true).

Having said that, it's no good turning out a whole load of games if they're about as exciting as mowing the lawn. If a software house releases a string of hopeless games in a row then the public catch on pretty quickly, ignore all the games missing the software

house runs out of money. One particular example is a little known software house called Alpha Omega, which turned out a load of pathetic games in 1987. Despite a change of name to the Power House and bundling free extras with each game, the quality of the games was as poor as ever, and the company went into liquidation very quickly.

But even if games are good, it doesn't necessarily mean that it's going to sell like wildfire. Remember Deus Ex Machina? It was a superbly original and exciting game (at least that's what people say), but because it was so different to the norm, the public didn't want to know about it. Automata (the producers) released a string of bizarre (cult) games such as Deus Ex Machine, PMania and My Name Is Uncle Groucho. You Win a Fat Cigar, but sales of D.E.M. were so bad, the company shut up shop quickly (nevertheless, Mel Croucher, the joint head of Automata went on to success in computer journalism, and wrote the SAM manual). (One of Mel's Pet-projects, ID, was later released on the short-lived "No-Name" label from CIL. CIL later folded, owing a lot of money to programmers such as Fergus McNeil).

The current computer game business revolves around licences. Ten years ago all games were highly original, and indeed originality was an important factor in games early on. Nowadays, it's very different. The most popular games are those which have some connection with a book, a film, a TV programme, or a famous celebrity. It certainly helps sales - anyone remember World Cup Carnival? In case you don't, it was the official Mexico '86 computer game, with loads of freebies inside the box. It appeared that nobody minded about the game being abysmal (and the terrible reviews which followed), people bought



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Due to other commitments, most noticeably with our sister mag **SQUARE ONE**, Polly Shephard is no longer able to compile **Playpen**. So in her stead, you've got me! Hope you don't mind. I don't think you will though, because we're gaffole of reviews to keep you happy, such as *Shadow of the Beast*, *Klax* (Spectrum version this time), the latest in a longline of SAM puzzle games *Pazook*, and more. So, without further ado, off we go.

## SEYMOUR GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

Spectrum / £3.99 / Codemasters

Seymour is another lovable cartoon character from Codemasters, and his first adventure sees him in Hollywood, the land of the stars. Needless to say, Seymour is extremely happy about getting a part in a movie, but unfortunately the director has gone on holiday and taken the rest of the cast with him, leaving Seymour to make the film for himself. The game is the usual Codemasters arcade adventure, which involves you running around screens using objects A and B to get C which enables you to get past D, etc. Seymour can carry up to three objects, but not all of them have obvious uses, and some are hidden away in the studios. Don't touch anything that might give Seymour an accident, because it probably will, resulting in him losing one of his three lives.

Graphics and Sound are, as usual, excellent, with lots of colour, and limited clash, and a nice tune in the background. However, there's nothing new here, and that's the main problem with the game. If you've played *Dizzy* or any of the other Codemasters arcade adventures, then you'll know exactly what to expect, which takes the fun out of the game completely if you know exactly what's going on. To sum it up, therefore, I'd recommend this game to anyone who hasn't got any Codemasters arcade adventures, or who can't get enough of them. Most people, however, will find the game has a limited lifespan, and if you didn't like *Dizzy* then you won't like this game either.

**VERDICT** Playability 85 Addictiveness 52 Graphics 90 Sound 90 **OVERALL 82**

## SHADOW OF THE BEAST

Spectrum / Gemin/G&H / Around £4.00

The plot, as if it were important, sees you in charge of a warrior in a foreign land trying to destroy the big beast that controls the land. This involves searching the whole land in order to find the beast and his companions, and destroy them.

The game itself starts out as being a simple left/right scrolling beat-em-up. This changes slightly when you enter a building, upon which the game changes to a cross between a beat-em-up and a maze game. At one end of the building, there is usually a very large and very untrendly monster that you must do battle with, such as what can be best described as a huge mouth, or a three-headed dragon in a bad mood.

The gameplay has two major faults. Firstly, the 'outside' area is far too big, and gets boring quickly, being merely a 'move kill move kill etc.' type game. The 'inside' area is more enjoyable to play, though. Unfortunately, the second, more important fault is with the muddled. Every time you go in and out of a building, you have to load another section. This is time, and boring. At least you are actually given the option of whether or not you really do want to load the next section, or if you would rather continue in the present one.

The graphics are well drawn, with some nice parallax scrolling, but the sprite animation is poor, consisting of only two frames, which isn't really enough for this type of game. Sound is good, with an atmospheric 128K tune.

Overall, if you can put up with the multiload system, then the game is enjoyable, but there are better games of the same genre around (such as Myth, for example)

**VERDICT** Playability 72 Addictiveness 88 Graphics 78 Sound 78 **OVERALL** 70

## **PAZOOK**

SAM / Supplement Software / £4.50 Review by David Ledbury

This is one in a growing series of games written by David Tenks, for 88 a off-shoot title Supplement Software. The range has concentrated on games that could all be called 'simple yet addictive' and this is one of those.

Pazook is "inspired" by Puznik and like Puznik the idea is simply to match tiles to make them vanish. Each level has a playing area and a variety of patterned tiles to match and remove. If 1 piece is left, you're lost a life.

There are various tricks to removing the pieces, and you soon pick these up. Graphically the game isn't spectacular. The graphics are colourful, but lack definition. Sound is from a Sound Machine piece which isn't terrible, but this is an area where the Supplement Software has been rather lacking in. However as stated before, this game's strength is its playability. If you like "match and remove" puzzle games then you'll like it. If not

**VERDICT** Playability 79 Addictiveness 74 Graphics 81 Sound 88 **OVERALL** 75

## **KLAX**

Spectrum / Hit Squad / £3.99

Puzzle games appear to be popular with most people, due to their simple yet highly addictive gameplay, and Klax is certainly no exception.

The game sees you controlling a paddle which is at the bottom of a long conveyor belt. Blocks keep rolling down the conveyor belt and you have to collect them, miss three blocks and the game's over. When you catch a block, you can do one of three things. You can either push it back up the conveyor belt (except it comes back again soon at a greater speed), hang on to it for a minute catch another block (you can only hold a few blocks at a time though), or drop it in the pit below you. The idea is to drop the different coloured blocks into the pit so that they make a line of tiles the same colour (shades of "Connect 4" here). This might be horizontal, vertical or diagonal. The minimum number of tiles in the line starts off as three but increases on later levels. Just get a set number of lines, and you've completed the level. And so on ad infinitum.

As with all of these puzzle games, graphics and sound take a back seat. Only a third of the screen is really used in the game, the rest is all background, and most of the action takes place in the lower middle half of the screen. Nevertheless, the game is more exciting to look at than Tetris. Sound is limited to a few spot effects and a 128K tune.

However, the game is instantly playable and you can get into straight away. There's a lot more variety than Tetris, but not enough to make it complicated. The game has that all important "just one more go" factor, I just had to complete a level to see what the next one looked like.

All in all, I think that this game is a lot of fun and totally unputdownable. Grab a copy now, you'll be addicted for ages - I know I am!

**VERDICT** Playability 82 Addictiveness 97 Graphics 55 Sound 50 **OVERALL** 84

## **NAVY MOVES**

Spectrum / Hit Squad / £3.99 (originally released by Dynamic)

If you've got a copy of ZAT 14, you'll remember I said that Dynamic games are

ridiculously hard. This game is no exception. The plot, see you infiltrate a naval base to retrieve enemy information. The game consists of three parts. Firstly, you have to make your way across a whole load of sea mines in a rubber dinghy. Then you have to jet ski across the water, avoiding sharks, etc, to get to the base. Finally, you infiltrate the base, blow up everything and everyone, and retrieve the papers.

Now I'd love to tell you what the second and third parts of the game are like, but I can't, because I can't get past the first one, even with an infinitelyas POKÉ! The game is just so annoying, it's unbelievable. You have to position your dinghy between two mines exactly, there's only one right place to land. Then you have to jump over the mines and land in exactly the right position again. If you're even an fiftie as one pixel out, the dinghy blows up, and shoots you into the sea, losing a life.

Like most Dynamic games, the graphics are large, colourful and well animated, even if they become a little undetailed and unclear at times. Sound is limited to some irritating spot effects, usually consisting of the 'boom' when your dinghy blows up. Overall, I'm afraid to say that this game is completely unplayable. I suppose some people may find it addictive, to keep trying to get past the mines, but most people will find it hard to keep playing the game rather than throwing away the tape, never to load it again. Only buy this if you're a masochist!

**VERDICT** Playability 10 Addictiveness 14 Graphics 55 Sound 31 **OVERALL 10**

## **ZODDS**

Spectrum / Alternative / £3.99

For those who don't know, Zoids were miniature robot models which were quite popular in the mid eighties. Around that time, this game came out to accompany it, and was met with varied reactions.

The gameplay is based on the fact that there are two Zoid teams, blue (good guys) and red (bad guys). You've got to locate and build together a giant blue Zoid which will hopefully wipe out the red Zoids and bring back peace.

The game itself is a join driven strategy game, which was quite original at the time. You control a blue Zoid which moves around the landscape destroying red Zoid cities by means of launching missiles (which takes you into a subgame in which you must guide the missile to its target). Once you've done that, you can get any parts of the giant blue Zoid that are lying around. Once you've done that, you can go to other cities and do the same thing.

As with most strategy games, graphics and sound tend to take a back seat. Nevertheless, graphics consist of well drawn icons, which appear confusing initially, but are pretty easy to understand, and some nice 3D vector graphics. Sound, on the other hand, is completely pathetic, consisting of the odd beep or two. The game itself does take some time to get into, and if you like games you can get into quickly, then you'll probably give up in the first few minutes. However, if you persevere, you'll find that the game can be quite exciting, especially when attacking other cities. However, I found after a while the game started to get a bit repetitive, being merely a 'move, attack city, move attack city etc etc' routine.

In short, I'd say that if you like strategy games and vector graphics, then the game may appeal to you, but if Space Invaders or Tetris is your cup of tea, I'd advise you to look elsewhere. Mind you, for £3.99 you can't go too wrong.

**VERDICT** Playability 52 Addictiveness 61 Graphics 80 Sound 7 **OVERALL 59**

And that's all we've got this issue as far as Playpen is concerned. In the meantime, if you've written a review you want everyone else to read, then don't be shy, send it in to the ZAT address!

R.S.



# PUBLICA DOMINIUS

D LEDBURY  
S MULLEN



Mike A's a little busy at the moment, so he's asked me to stand in for him this issue. What has he let you in for...?

Last issue, in the internal news pages, I unveiled several plans for new offshoots to ZAT. As mentioned in the News supplement (that MOST of you received), the overall choice on the SAM side resulted in a new disk based venture: SAM PRIME.

SAM PRIME is a new diskzine, which has been designed to fill most of the void left by the demise the SAM Newsletter. It will help promote new and existing software - from ALL publishers - and not just from Quasi & ZAT Soft. It will feature help for any programming problems people may come across and so on.

As in the Newsletter, Adrian Parker talks about Hardware, although more specifically K-Scope. Andy Wright's ROM Source listing appears in PRIME, and so does a new section called PRIME CLINIC, which offers help on the SAM Arcade creation systems - from the authors themselves.

The first issue costs the special price of £1.50, and is available NOW! Future issues will cost £2.50, or £2 to former Newsletter Subscribers. Subscriptions cost £15 or £12 to former Newsletter Subscribers. Orders should be sent to: Martin Scholes, PRIME PO, 5 Beacon Flats, Kings Hays Road, Hillingdon - Uxford, TF1 1RG. (Cheques made payable to me.) If you happen to read ZAT in Poland, then

next issue we plan to unveil plans to buy PRIME in Poland.

A large number of letters have already been sold, and he comments have been favorable - and a few sensible suggestions have come back. One or two I may even listen to. (Just kidding, all opinions matter to me ... hence my constant musing of the lack of letters for ZAT!)

Does all this mean I'm not bothering with the Spectrum? No, it doesn't. At the moment, I'm making some notes on the next stage of evolution of Andy Davis's great tapezine AitchHew. With any luck, this tape should soon become a pretty potent size indeed. But more on that soon...

Going back to Mike now, Mike has recently joined the top demo writing team Entropy. Entropy, are some of the best UK demo coders on SAM, and have produced some excellent material. But if you are keen on getting Mike's demo disks, then turn to the back page. They are now all directly available from me, at the special price of £1.50 each. They are ideal if you have the Disc Alpha Sampler, and you wish to show it off.

SAM Quartet 2 - the last ever issue - is finally finished, and hopefully everyone who has ordered a copy from me has got it by now. If not, send a letter telling me off to the SAM PRIME address. When I crashed SQ, I used manual information storage (ie an old notepad) but with PRIME some of the records are computerised ... finally!

Not too much waffle about SQ, or this'll be renamed the "David Ledbury Promotion Page". But it's 2 disks, costs £2.50, and has a wide range of goodies: arcade, puzzle and adventure games. Utilities and demos.

The replacement 'zine for SQ is out now, SPQ - or more to the point SAM PUBLIC QUARTERLY. This is created by Sam Buchanan, and his address is on the advert in the News supplement. Each disk is £1.50, and is pretty darn good. Issues of SPQ can be obtained direct from SAM PRIME.

He's just been approached by a potential new PD columnist for ZAI, who not only wants to write about the Spectrum side of PD, but also happens to run a PD library. But more on this next time.

Speaking of our Spectrum PD coverage, here's Stephen Mullen...

I'm happy to be able to start my Spectrum PD column with some good news. There is PD out there!

Firstly, there is Prism PD, which is run in a similar fashion to the IG bit libraries. Prism was set up in February and according to Martyn Sherwood, the man "in charge", is showing signs of being a great success.

Prism can provide a wide range of software, 300 titles at the last count. These include games, business utilities, short routines, utilities and much more.

They send out titles on three formats. Tape, microdrive and +D 3.5" disk. Prism also provides a digitizing and Book Top Publishing service. If you want more information, hang an SAE to: TJ Rodney Cress, Bilton, Rugby, CV22 7HJ

### PD Game Packs

As if that wasn't enough, Robert Frendrick is offering three PD game packs for the Spectrum. The first pack contains four games, one being an adventure and the two further packs contain four and five titles

respectively. Each pack costs £1.50 or £4 if you buy all three. Contact Robert at 1 Northolen Close, Grays, Essex RM16 2NX.

### Alchemist PD

The third library in this issue's column is Alchemist PD, run by erstwhile ZAI columnist, Andy David. He offers a vast range of utilities and games, with plenty of titles especially useful for those with an interest in Cores. (For more Cores information, see this issue's BackChat and MeanBiz)

The fee is competitive to say the least, just 20p per title or 10 for £1.50. Simply provide the tape and the SAE. A full list is available for free if you send a tape and stamp to Andy at:

62 Tithen Barn Lane, Woodhouse, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S13 7LH

### AlchNews 4

In the latest issue of the aforementioned zepazine, Andy is questioning whether anyone is "out there". He puts this down to the hot summer leading to a poor response to recent editions of AlchNews.

It's not all doom and gloom though. Full details of services provided by Alchemis Research are in the same issue along with full details of the PD library. So prove Andy wrong and drop him a line, and a tape!

Well, I hope that helps to fill the void as far as Spectrum PD goes. This month was all addresses but next time, I'll try and squeeze in some reviews of the top titles.

If you know of a library, or run one of your own, please contact me at either the main address or direct. My address is: 4 Johnson Grove, Liverpool, L12 9LR.

Daniel Canino's not appearing in this issue's Chip Shop, so we've given him a bit of extra time off to work on Music Master without being disturbed. However, next issue sees the first part of a special "Code Breaker" program. But I'm not spoiling it for you!

Although Code Breaker is actually for both machines, some people do think we don't cater enough on the Spectrum technical side. So this following section may be handy for those people.

This issue sees the start of a new series of interesting ROM routines for Spectrum owners, from the ever capable hands of Richard Swann. Without any further ado, it's time to join Richard with ....

## ROMARAMA

By Richard Swann

If you've been following the Code Breaker series in ZAT, then no doubt you'll be able to write some limited machine code programs. However, there are a lot of things which haven't been covered, such as drawing lines, boxes and circles on screen, printing upright or even multiplying and dividing numbers. The simple reason is because a program to do these things would be quite complex.

But fear not! You are probably aware of the fact that your computer has at least 16K of ROM, memory which you

can read, but not write to. What you may not know that in ROM, there are hundreds of small routines already built in to do something useful, and can be used in conjunction with your main machine code program in RAM. Most of the routines are fairly fast and reliable, and can save memory by not having to write similar routines in RAM.

To execute a ROM routine, you have to put certain values into certain registers (these are the "inputs"). CALL the routine, and get certain results in certain registers (these are the "outputs").

If you were reading the Musicix article last month, you will have already come across one ROM routine in the Spectrum. This is the routine called LD-BYTES, and takes the following inputs:

IX = Start of code  
DE = Length of code  
A = Header type

The value of A can be anything from 0 to 255 (FFh) and determines the length of the tern header (that's the "where" bit with blue and red stripes at the start!) in addition to this, you need to set the carry flag (done by the command SCF).

The routine is then called by using CALL 1366 (0556h). Its outputs are:

IX = Address of last byte loaded in  
DE = Number of bytes not loaded in

This outputs can be quite useful, because if a loading error occurs, you



can inspect the value of the IX register to see what address it got up to.

Over the next few months, I'm going to be printing some of the more useful ROM routines. You can find a full list of Spectrum ROM routines in the book "The Complete Spectrum ROM Disassembly" by Dr. Lee Logan and Dr. Frank Ottens (ISBN 0 86161 116 0). Unfortunately this book is out of print, but your local library may be able to get you a copy. [See the following item for information on other books that some people thought out of circulation!] ]

**START/NEW** Address 4555 (11CBh)

**Inputs:**

DE: Last address to be NEMed

A: 0

Plus the DI command (243dF3h)

This routine resets the computer, but only up to a certain address. All the memory beyond this address is preserved. When the machine is switched on, this routine is called with the value of DE being 65535 (FFFFh), thereby wiping all the memory.

The best use of this routine is during a crash. By using a multiflex, you can restore normality and still keep some of the memory intact. For example, put the following POKEs into memory.

```
5800.F3 5801.AF
5802.11 5803.FF
5804.5F 5805.C3
5806.C8 5807.11
2000.00 2001.58
2002.01
```

Now press the "I" key (which will now jump to 5800), and you'll find that the computer has reset, but left intact all the memory from 6000 (24576d) onwards.

Next issue, I'll be giving you some ROM routines to do with graphics. Until then, happy programming!

Thank you for another great article Richard.

Richard mentions that several topics such as Circles, and other graphics, haven't been covered in CodeBreaker: in fact there will be some graphic routines in issue 17 CodeBreaker.

Although this isn't really the place to mention it, you may be interested in a review that Richard has managed to gain for ZAT recently; none other than the Editor of YS' Great work!

Back to more technical matters now...

I've read recently in some magazines, that a lot of people are crying out after some of the "classic" Machine Code books for their Spectrums & SAMs. So, it is with great pleasure that I'm pleased to list the following selection tracked down by Daniel Cussen, and available still from Computer Manuals Ltd, 50 James Road, Lysadley, Birmingham, B11 2BA. Or you can phone them on 021 706 6000. But what have they got?

Newsweek Z80 Pocket Book by Roberts. Priced £12.95 (080842)

Z80 Applications by Coffman, Priced £19.95 (007090)

Programming the Z80 by Rodney Zaks.

Priced £23.95 (002006)  
 30 Rear BASIC by Olive Prigmore.  
 Priced £9.95 (008549)  
 Mastering Machine Code by Iain Baker.  
 Priced £9.95 (008303)  
 Step by step graphics 3 by Latcher.  
 Priced £6.95 (014395)  
 Step by step graphics 2 by Latcher.  
 Priced £6.95 (014408)  
 Step by step Programming 1 by  
 Graham. Priced £6.95 (011819)  
 Step by step Programming 2 by  
 Graham. Priced £6.95 (011823)

The number in brackets is the code  
 number for each title.

It's been a little while since Stephen  
 Wilson's appeared, due to lack of  
 space but here he is finally, with  
 another...

## Intergrate0BitS by Stephen Wilson

### SAME CLASS

Here is a routine to send some data  
 to the sound chip.

I have used Steve Hatting's  
 SC\_ASSEMBLER - I understand he has  
 compiled a LHM source converter to  
 convert source code  
 to BASIC

```
10 SOUND 28,1,20,1,0,255,16,2
20 FOR COUNTER=1 TO 10
30 READ SOUND_DATA:SOUND
  B,SOUND_DATA:PAUSE 100
40 NEXT COUNTER
50 SOUND 28,0
60 DATA 10,20,40,80,100,120,140,
  160,180,200
```

Line 10 turns the sound chip on; sets  
 generator 0 for note; generator 0 at  
 full volume; generator 0 at octave 3

Line 20-40 send various frequencies  
 to generator 0, Line 50 turns sound  
 chip off.

Line 60 holds the data

### IN MACHINE CODE

```
5 PUT 49152
10 ORG 49152
20 LD HL,NOTETABLE
30 LD C,255
40 LD B,15
50 loop: PUSH BC
60 LD A,(HL)
70 LD B,I
80 OUT (C),A
90 INC HL
100 LD B,0
110 LD A,(HL)
120 OUT (C),A
130 INC HL
140 CALL wait
150 POP BC
160 SJMP loop
170 RET
180 notetable: DB 28,1,20,1
190 DB 0,255,16,2,8,10,8,20,8,40
200 DB 8,80,8,100,8,120,8,140
210 DB 8,160,8,180,8,200,28,0
220 wait: PUSH BC
230 LD BC,32768
240 waitloop: DEC BC
250 LD A,B
260 OR C
270 JR NZ,waitloop
280 POP BC
290 RET
```

TYPE "A" to assemble it, then B to get  
 to BASIC, and type save "View.C"CODE  
 49152,68. Then in BASIC type CALL  
 49152 (or load it in from the disk).

Line 05 tells the assembler where to  
 put it in the memory

Line 10 tells the assembler this is  
 where the code will be, (You can make  
 the code run at any address, but  
 store it at a different one)

\*\*\*\* example 2 \*\*\*\*

Here is an example of switching 2 screens, using the Video Port- Port 252

Remember I said you could set up a screen in 1 page, and switch it with another, well heres an example of it.

It could be used for a slideshow program, but the max amount of screens it can show at once, without loading from disk, is determined by how much memory you have left. (You could use Steve Huttling's Screen Compressor in conjunction with this, to be able to store more screens.)

This is example called SAMC. SLIDE uses only 3 screens, as I am stuck for time

We will use pages 06 & 07 for 1 screen, 08 & 09, for another, and 10 & 11 for the last one.  
(Be careful of DOS which lies below the Screen Page)

Thus Screen1 = (6+1) 7\*16384= 114688

Screen 2= (8+1)\*9\*16384= 147456

Screen 3= (10+1)\*11\*16384= 180224

50:

```
10 PUT 49152
20 ORG 49152
20 IN A, (252)
30 LD (TEMP), A
40 LD HL, ES:08
50 LD DE, PALBUFFER
60 LD BC, E40
70 LDR
80 LD A, 20100111
90 LD B, 3
100 ; B-COUNTER=3 SCREENS
110 LD HL, SCREEN1PAL
120 LOOP-PUSH BC
130-PORT 252: MODE 4 SCREENS
140 OUT (C), A
150 CALL SET-PALETTE
```

```
160 CALL WAIT
170 CALL WAIT
180 CALL WAIT
190 CALL WAIT
200 CALL WAIT
210 CALL WAIT
220-WE WANT A BIG, BIG PAUSE
230 INC A
240 INC A
250-NEXT PAGE OF SCREEN
260 POP BC
270 DJNZ LOOP
280 LD A, (TEMP)
290 LD C, 255
300 OUT (C), A
310 LD HL, PALBUFFER
320 LD DE, ES:08
330 LD BC, E40
340 LDR
350 RET
360 WAIT-PUSH AF
370 PUSH BC
380 LD BC, 65535
390 WAIT-LOOP-DEC BC
400 LD A, B
410 OR C
420 JR NZ, WAIT-LOOP
430 POP BC
440 POP AF
450 RET
460 TEMP:DB 0
470 SCREEN1PAL:DB 7777777
[16 nos of your screen palette nos
the program below is view palette
nos]
480 SCREEN2PAL:DB 77777
490 SCREEN3PAL:DB 77777
500 PALBUFFER:DS E40
510 SET-PALETTE-PUSH HL
520 LD DE, ES:08
530 LD BC, 16
540 LDR
550 POP HL
560 LD DE, ES:EC
570 LD BC, 16
580 LDR
590 RET
```

Then simply assemble the program as usual.

\*\*\*\* How it works \*\*\*\*

Line 20, Loads HL with the start of the table of note values, NOTETABLE. This contains all the data to be sent to the chip. Much the same as the DATA BASIC statement.

Line 30 & 40 loads C with 255, and B with 15- this is a counter to how many times it will read a byte from the table and send it to the second chip. In this case we are sending a pair of numbers each time we go round the loop, so we are sending 15 pairs of nos.

Line 50 is the start of the loop, marked with a label LOOP it stores the contents of BC onto the Stack which is a place of memory set out to do the task of temporarily storing registers. To place a data on it we PUSH it, to get it back we POP, this POP's the last byte PUSHed onto the register that is defined in the POP statement. So now the contents of BC are on the stack. (B=15, C=255)

Line 60 loads A with whatever HL is pointing to. HL points to the start of the NOTETABLE (remember: LD HL, NOTETABLE) (This is a 3 byte instruction) so A = the first item of data which is the 28.

Line 70 loads B with 1, we are about to send a register to the second chip, so we make b-1 (remember) we now need that place of data, in Line 80

Line 90 increases the pointer HL, so now HL points to 1, the data we are about to send. As it is data we make B=0 in line 100,

Line 110 Loads A with that, and Line 120 sends it to the second chip. Line 130 increases the pointer. So now we have sent 2 items of DATA, 28, 1 which turns the second chip on, and the pointer's pointing to the next place of data 20

Line 140 now CALLS a subroutine: Line 60 SUB is BASIC, it calls a routine called WAIT. We call this routine, because if we didn't, the routine would run so fast, we wouldn't hear the notes, so we need to make the processor slow down, by making it run a little loop for a while, before sending the next note.

At Line 220, the start of the routine, we PUSH BC, because we will want to use BC, but BC already holds values, we will want to use when we go back, so we temporarily 'SAVE' BC.

Line 230 loads BC with 32768, just any number will do, this is the number of times it will go around the loop, the bigger the number, the longer the loop.

Line 240 Decreases BC by one, so now BC will be 32767.

Line 250 Load a with b, and we test this value against C in line 260. What this really does is test if B and C are at 0.

At line 270, we go around the loop again if B and C are NOT zero, they are not so we go around again. It runs the loop again starting from line 240, and will do so until B and C both =0.

At line 280, we recover B and C's old values, and the RET, at line 290 takes us back the routine, so we then go back to Line 150, where this brings BC back of the stack again - (remember at the start B=15, C=255).

At line 160 it tests if b=0 and if not, decreases it and then goes back around the routine, this time with b=14. It continues all this until B=0, where at Line 160 we return to BASIC.

Lines 180-210 alters the data

At the start, we don't know for certain the value of Basics screen page, so we store it in location TEMP.

In BASIC, the colours for the current screen are stored in a table which is 240 bytes long, starting at 65548.

We want to let Basic get its colour back, so we store this table in PALBUFFER.

We are changing the colours, because my 3 screens, all had different colours, their 16 colours stored in their 3 respective buffers, SCREEN1PAL, SCREEN2PAL, SCREEN3PAL.

We load A with the page of the first screen (PAGE 7) and make its MODE 4 screen this is why A=20100111, at line 90.

B is used as a counter, 3 in our case, and that is stored on the stack. Next we page in the screen, to be displayed. We then set it's colours using the routine SET-PALETTE.

When calling this, HL should hold the table of the 16 colours to use. When this is finished, HL will be pointing to the next 16, so it is left alone.

We then Use WAIT, to make a pause.

We increase A to the next page, which will be page 9 for the next screen.

We then test if the counter is to 0.

if so, we load BASIC's colour back in , and its screen page no, and then RETURN to BASIC.

see if you are using your own routines use the following to change colours:

LD HL, ENDTABLE1

LD B, 16  
LD C, 240  
010R

(these are example numbers)

STARTABLE/DB 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,  
8, 9  
DB 10, 11, 12  
ENDTABLE/DB 15

== Using this routine for yourself ==

First you will have to decide how many screens you will have. The max is 5. (256K) as DOS is at page 13 (256K), so you cannot overwrite that, and you probably won't want to use anything below 65536, so you have from 65536-229376 =163840 and 1 screen takes up 32768 =163840/32768=5

(a screen in mode 3/4 REALLY takes up 24K, but you can use other methods to get a max of 6) (256K, SIZE's can double it)

You must decide which screens are going into which pages, I started mine at page 7-11, with the 3 of them at page 7, 9, 11

Change the counter at line 110 to how many screens you are going to use. And you will have to make up tables like SCREENPAL, for each of the screens palette. To find a screen's palette, use the following program..

```
10 REM $Wilson
20 PRINT TAB 10;"Palette Viewer"
30 PRINT "Press '0' for
Directory""Any other to continue"
40 GET a$
IF a$="0" OR a$="a" THEN OR 1
PAUSE
50 CLS
60 PRINT AT 0,0;"Which screen to
examine palette of?"
INPUT i2: AT 3,0;i$
70 IF LEN i$<0 OR LEN i$>10 OR
CODE i$<-13 THEN GO TO 60
80 CLS
90 LOAD i$ SCREEN$
```



100 CLS

LET a\$=MEM\$(&55a0 TO &55e7)

POKE &55ac,a\$

110 PRINT AT 0,17;"Palette"

120 PRINT AT 1,0;"Register"

130 PRINT AT 1,10;"Colour"

140 FOR r=0 TO 15

150 PRINT AT 2+r,0; TAB 2;r; TAB

12;CODE a\$(r+1)

160 NEXT r

To combine all your screens into 1 solid lump of code use the following program....

10 CLS E

20 INPUT "How many screens to code?"

"a"

30 INPUT "What address to start at?"

"b"

LET b=a

40 FOR r=1 TO a

50 PRINT AT 0,0;"What is the name of screen "r"

60 INPUT a\$

61 BEEP 1,0

70 LOAD a\$ CODE b

80 LET b=b+32768

90 NEXT r

100 CLS

110 PRINT AT 2,0;"Input Name to save code as "

INPUT f\$

120 IF LEN f\$=0 OR LEN f\$>10 OR CODE f\$=13 THEN GO TO 100

130 SAVE f\$ CODE a,(a=32768)

140 RUN

Then assemble the code as usual, and then save it using the filename "view.c". Then make a simple basic prog. like this ....

10 LOAD "view.c" CODE 49152

20 LOAD "name" CODE 7+16384

30 CALL 49152

Now as an exercise, you can upgrade this slideshow program to fade away each time a picture shows, and to do some fancy scrolling, while playing a 6

channel music prog. (only joking)!!

No, seriously, you could easily add some fancy bits to it, if you are experienced enough....

Its easy when you know how!!

Hope you've enjoyed this enjoyable little article, look out for more on the way....

And that's all for this issue, hope to see you all next time. Same time, same place.

## Adventurers Convention

A convention for all Adventure Game enthusiasts is to be held on the 24th October 1992 at the Royal Angus Theatre Hotel in Birmingham from 10am to 7pm.

Admission will be by ticket only. Price - £7.00 each.

A limited number of stalls are available for those wishing to sell or demonstrate Adventure related products. Please ask for further details if you wish to take advantage of this facility.

If you wish to stay overnight in the Hotel, a special room rate has been arranged for those attending the Convention.

To reserve your ticket and for further information please contact Wicky Jackson (after 7pm or at weekends).

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Mobile Tel: 0836 332 656

Address: 128 Merton Hall Road  
Wimbledon, London. SW20 3PE.

# Mean biz

by CARREN BLACKBURN  
and JANCY DAVIS and CO.

Some players are a fancy breed. They usually spend most of their time wiggling a joystick to kill off exotic sprites, or collecting golden keys to gain extra lives. Some however do spend time dabbling in the complexities of programming, with the hindsight of ultimately designing and programming their own games. Programs such as *White Lightning* and *HUNG* enabled Spectrum users to attempt to create CRY games, but now SAMeasura Inc can have a go with Andy Wright's latest brainchild: *Games Master*. Reviewed by Daniel Cannon ...

This is a review of one of the 2 games designer programs available for SAM 1 have to say that I'm far more machine code every time when it comes to writing games. So don't be too surprised if I slam it (only kidding, some of the features are quite impressive).

The program is called *Games Master*, from Batesoft. Supplied in the package is a 60 page manual and the boot up disc, containing the actual program itself, a few GM examples, and some sprites. The main GM program is about 20K of machine code and a massive BASIC program called 'The Editor' which allows you to design your sprites, write your GM programs, etc... It has to be said that the editor doesn't look pretty but it does the job.

Control to the operation of GM is a sprite, as Andy Wright describes it - "a computer thingy that combines graphic data with other information". Going into slightly more detail - it has graphic data to describe what it looks

like, a mask which tells the computer the size and shape of the graphic data, a start position, a path which the sprite follows, and something which details what happens when the sprite hits another sprite.

So all you need to do define these bits of information, put the sprite on the screen, and it will go off following its own instructions without any more help. Sprites are printed quickly on screen, but put too many on at once and things will begin to slow down.

However, a game just isn't all sprites. The score has to be worked out, rooms displayed, instructions printed, and so on. The rather grandly titled 'Games Master Control Language' is what you program with when using GM. Your programs are split into modules (like small procedures), and each module does a different job. Eg. One could be used to alter the score, another to set up variables, and so on. Programming using modules can take some time to get used to, is one way they're quite powerful, but in another they can be restrictive to program with.

For example, to put a sprite on a screen which bounces around all that is needed is 1 command! Just put the sprite on the screen with the PLACE command, and it appears and moves around without any further programming. Only when it hits something (like another sprite) will the GMCL be needed again. Then another module will be called. This module tells the sprite what to do (you could tell the sprite to explode, or disappear, or whatever) Then the sprite will do whatever you told it to, and GMCL is only needed again when, say, the explosion has died down and must disappear off the screen. So you can get some meters bouncing around the screen over a starry background with only 10 lines of programming!

However, they can be restrictive. Say you want to limit how many bullets appear on screen when you press fire (eg. one at a time), because you don't want to spray the screen with lead every time fire is pressed. Yep, sounds simple enough. But this took a lot of thought to get around because everything is so automatic - it was very difficult to get GM to check the number of bullets on screen! Eventually I tried a different approach (I timed the time for a bullet to travel across the screen and set a timer in the program, and that worked OK).

GMCL is designed to be used with sprites - so it has a lot of sprite commands (flipping, mirroring, etc...). You'll want some text on screen, and a few colours, so commands for these are provided. Sound is also available (the stereo volume changes to follow the sprite across the screen - but my telly is mute, so nothing spectacular happens).

However, little 'real' programming can be done. For example there are no multistatement lines available, the number of lines per module is limited to a screen deep (so JPND commands are needed to jump from one module to the next one to carry on programming). FOR NEXT loops only count forwards, only 26 number variables are allowed, IF THEN is very simple, and so on.

The reason that GMCL is kept very simple is so that it runs very fast, and in games that is important. But programming with it is like programming a C64 - very difficult. Luckily there are 2 commands to call BASIC (perhaps for working out some maths) or machine code (for special effects which GM cannot handle) are supplied. But sometimes BASIC and especially code can be fiddly to get to work with GM.

Here's a program which bounces meteors around a starry background. To save space I've used colons to separate lines. You should split them back up to get it to run on GM. This bit is for the starry background, nothing too special here. FOR NEXT isn't as friendly as before, and the stop must always be included.

```
PEN 7: FOR A=1,100,1: PLOT RND (255),RND (191): NEXT A
```

This bit will make 10 meteors bounce around the screen at different speeds. First add the following to module 1, which puts 10 copies of sprite 1 (the meteor) onto the screen at random positions, with different X and Y speeds.

```
FOR B=1,10,1: PLACE LRND (127),RND (191),1: SPEED GRND (8)-4, RND (8)-4: NEXT B
```

Load "meteor.s" into sprite 1. Change the following sprite details: BOUNCES = YES, EGDE LIMIT = YES, MISSILE = NO.

This routine will make the meteors cling when they hit together. First after Sprites vs Sprites collisions, where sprite 1 (meteor) hits sprite 1 (another meteor) then you should tell the computer to run module 2. At module 2, type is SOUND 1. This will play the default sound 1 every time the meteors collide. And the default SOUND 1 supplied when loaded is a sort of cling sound.

Not all of Games Master is easy to use so this I think it's because many of the commands are so like BASIC, yet the idea of using modules isn't. There is also a lack of any 'real' programming commands, and you're essentially limited to a few types of game (platform, maze, shoot 'em up).

But to be fair it is certainly better than the nightmare days of Burg and

Arcade Creator, and if people have the will power to sit down and learn a whole new programming language I can expect to see some very good games and games written using this. The option to call BASIC and code gain around most difficulties. Although code programs are written specifically for the job tend to look a bit more polished and work slightly faster, I can see this being for SAM games what Qalk did Spectrum adventures (lots of games, but not all of them a miracle of SAM programming).

### Ratings

Usefulness 75  
Presentation 70  
Compatibility SAM

Overall 80

To complement this issue's BACKCHAT, Andy Davis continues his look at Modems from another angle ....

If you're familiar with the world of comms and have an old modem lying around, (90% of Spectrum owners have a VTX5000), then it'd be worth gathering dust. Pull it out of the cupboard, wipe off the dust and hook it up.

When you switch on, you should be greeted by the usual start up screen. I28 or +2 owners should revert to 48 mode and type OUT 127, 67 or load VTX best. VTXI28, Fireview+2, VTX Editor or Firescroll, all available from Alchemist PD.

Find out your telephone number and load up the appropriate software. If you are contacting a worldwide number, load up Fireview+2 or VTX Editor. Both have frame grabbing routines which allow you to save on phone costs and store now, read later. Scrolly connections will need FireScroll or Scrolling Shaden Terminal (SST). I

prefer FireScroll because of the excellent screen record option so you can replay it all later. SST features predefined function keys and a little clock, so you can speed up certain functions and save time and money.

Dial your number. It should ring twice then silence. Make sure your switch is set to M/HET if you have a VTX5000. When you hear the long tone, flick the switch to ON-LINE and replace the handset. The on-line light should be HL. Press a key to acknowledge you are there and you should be greeted by the password system if you are 'not off' then you are either using the wrong software or the speed is not compatible.

Most bulletin boards need you to enter your full name, calling city and password. When you first ever join the BB (99% are free) you will have to enter your name, address and phone number for the sysop's (System Operator) files, so he can get in touch with you if he needs to or if someone has hacked into your access code and is doing some hacking under your name! Bulletin Boards can be prone to idiots who think they can crack the system and find secret information.

After you have entered your password, you can access the whole system. You are told if you have any messages left for you. If not, you can go to the main menu and either read general letters, send or receive files, alter your setup (the way you receive data) or page the sysop for a chat.

When you call be courteous. Remember it's cheaper after 6pm, so will be busier then. Check opening times. Most BBs will be operating from a standard telephone line shared by the house. If you call after midnight and the computer doesn't answer, hang up.

Sometimes, the computer may be down

and you may wake up the household! Some BBs still require the 'ring twice' technique. Phone up, let the phone ring twice hang up. Wait a couple of minutes for the sysop to setup the computer and run the BB software then call again.

If you would like to run your own Bulletin Board. Remember...

1) You must have permission from the phone owner and arrange a good time to open the BB. 11pm to 6am is usually best.

2) You must have a good modem with auto-answer. The GEC Dabechet 1223 is a good choice, but will need modifications to connect to a Spectrum.

3) You must have sufficient memory and a quickish disk system. D-TEL runs a vintedats BB on a +3 using the ramdisk, the +3 disk and an external disk. A good choice would be a +2 and 768k +0.

4) You can't set it up and abandon it. Occasionally, people will page you for help or a chat. Areas will need updating and letters to you must be answered or you won't get many users.

5) Decide whether you want to be a machine specific or cater for all tastes.

6) Include a mailbox letters facility for users to leave 'mail' to you and other users and maybe free or cheap software.

The best way to find out how to start a BB is talk to the sysop himself. Dave Walker runs the Spectrum BB 'D-TEL', his address can be found in Bechchet. Dave Gerahd runs 'INFOTEL' on an Amstrad PC. The BB number is 0737 766027 or talk to him on 0737 760911.

DIALSOFT is a system which allows 2 spectrum owners with VTX5000 modems to send and receive programs to each other as well as chat, down the telephone line. Both users will

need to load up DIALSOFT and have their modems switched to TX. Now, one dials the other, and both flick the switch to ON-LINE and replace the handset. Now they can chat or send programs.

The system is semi-intelligent. When one user selects Transmit data, the other computer will automatically set itself up to receive the data. The transmitter decides how many files to send and the address in memory of the code or select if to send just basic. The computer will send the data in blocks and only moves onto the next block if the receiver has got the data ok. When transmitting has finished, both terminals switch to chat mode. I've successfully received a PD assembler which was 13k long via dialsoft from Scotland and it only took around a minute. So if you need a program fast and can't wait for the post, use dialsoft!

Customers of Alchemist PD with credit can receive their programs via Dialsoft in the program is Dialsoftable (95Z src) so they get their software instantly and save on postage and sending a taped Contact me for more details.

Beside bulletin boards, there are many mail user adventures. 2 which were available on Micronet were TRASH and SHADES. MUD is the most popular adventure. Avalon is a new adventure system in my area. The number is 0742 670671 but I think it needs speeds of 1200 upwards. You can usually dig up these numbers in computer magazines or newspapers. In the future, I may be starting my own BB. If anyone is interested then write to me. The same applies if you want more information in general or anything else which is troubling you.

Any Comments are welcome, especially any problems for MicroDad!



# ARCADE ALLEY

Richard Swann & Co

Well there, it's that time in the year to forget about fair play, and do some serious cheating on some games! But before we get down to action, here's a quick reminder on how you POKE a game.

- 1) Type out the listing, and make sure you've typed it EXACTLY as written.
- 2) SAVE your listing in tape for future use
- 3) RUN the program you've typed it
- 4) Play the game from the start
- 5) Cheat to your heart's content!

**BMX SIMULATOR II** - Infinite time. The POKE will automatically detect whether you are loading side A or side B, and alter the POKE accordingly.

```
10 REM BMX I BOTH SIDES BY RCH
20 CLEAR 24319
30 FOR N=23296 TO 23329
40 READ APOKE,NA,NEXT N
50 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
60 DATA 221,30,0,86,17,0,1
70 DATA 62,255,55,205,95,5
80 DATA 48,241,33,24,91,34
90 DATA 118,95,195,0,95
100 DATA 33,0,203,34,81,35
110 DATA 195,0,95
```

**TRAILBLAZER** - Infinite time and jumps

Original version

```
10 REM TRAILBLAZER GREMLIN BY RCH
20 LOAD "" CODE
30 POKE 80027,43
40 POKE 80028,235
50 FOR N=80200 TO 169
60 READ A,P A->999 THEN POKE
NA,NEXT N
```

```
70 RANDOMIZE USR 60000
80 DATA 175,50,0,3,336 REM TIME
90 DATA 175,50,242,235 REM JUMPS
100 DATA 195,0,132,99 REM END
MARKER
```

Budget Barelease

```
10 REM TRAILBLAZER MASTERED BY RCH
20 FOR N=23296 TO 169
30 READ A,P A->999 THEN POKE
NA,NEXT N
40 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
50 DATA 221,30,203,92,17
60 DATA 62,0,82,255,55,205
70 DATA 48,5,48,241,33,24,91
80 DATA 34,254,32,195,222,92
90 DATA 175,50,0,3,136 REM TIME
100 DATA 175,50,242,1,88 REM JUMPS
110 DATA 195,0,132,99 REM END
MARKER
```

**Space 7** - Infinite lives

```
10 REM SPACE 7 BY RCH
20 CLEAR 24514,LOAD "" CODE
30 POKE 85226,0,POKE 65227,91
40 FOR N=23296 TO 23319
50 READ A,POKE NA,NEXT N
60 RANDOMIZE USR 65158
70 DATA 33,9,91,34,25,97
80 DATA 195,184,97,0,180
90 DATA 196,34,177,105
100 DATA 195,0,215
```

**TOOBIN'** - Infinite credits

```
10 REM TOOBIN' BY RCH
20 FOR N=24480 TO 24512
30 READ A,POKE NA,NEXT N
40 RANDOMIZE USR 24480
50 DATA 221,0,203,92,17
60 DATA 62,1,8,255,55,205
70 DATA 65,4,48,241,33,184
80 DATA 95,34,4,134,195,217
90 DATA 93,93,0,0,34,24
100 DATA 741,195,0,1,0
```

**WHOOOPS!**

In case you hadn't guessed already.

There were a few mistakes in the POKEs for Magicland Dizzy in issue 13. We're sorry about that. But here is a working routine:

```
30 CLEAR VAL "24000":LOAD "" CODE
VAL "24000"
20 POKE VAL "24078",VAL "D":POKE
VAL "24080",VAL "01"
30 FOR N=VAL "23296" TO VAL
"23303"
40 READ A:POKE N,ANEXT N
50 RANDOMIZE USR VAL "24000"
60 DATA VAL "62", VAL "82", VAL
"50"
70 DATA "183", VAL "115", VAL "135"
80 DATA VAL "94", VAL "94"
```

If you are typing the POKE in 128K BASIC, change line 20 to:

```
20 POKE VAL "24102", VAL "D":POKE
VAL "24103", VAL "01"
```

... and everything should be working perfectly normally (I hope!)

Apologies to anyone who couldn't get the routines working!

And to round off this issue's POKEs, here's a routine for this Amiga conversion from Grenda (which I believe is reviewed in this very issue)...

## SHADOW OF THE BEAST - Infanta Ulys

```
10 REM SOTS BY RICH
20 FOR N=23296 TO 23367
30 READ A:POKE N,ANEXT N
40 RANDOMIZE USR 23296
50 DATA 48,0,93,221,33,183
60 DATA 253,17,83,1,62,255
70 DATA 55,205,86,5,48,241
80 DATA 175,50,33,254,205
90 DATA 18,254,175,50,64,92
100 DATA 62,201,50,105,92
110 DATA 205,0,92,59,59,229
120 DATA 125,254,61,60,4
130 DATA 175,195,106,97,175
```

```
140 DATA 208,106,97,0,62,201
150 DATA 50,137,88,33,37,220
160 DATA 208,97,98,175,50
170 DATA 198,129,195,247,115
```

## HAYLPI

This is a new section to Arcade Alley, and probably the most useful yet. We all get painfully stuck on games from time to time; I certainly have. That's why we're here to help. If you're stuck on any game at all, old or new, just send a brief description of your problem to HAYLPI, ZAT, 33 Goring Bank, Telford, Shropshire, TF4 2LQ.

If we can help we'll print the solution in the next available issue, and even if we can't help, then we'll print the problem anyway, and if any reader can solve a problem we can't, then send in the solution, and we'll print it and give you some ZAT goodies as a reward!

Yikes! He seem to have run out of space. Never mind, we've got plenty lined up for next issue, so stay tuned for that. In the meantime, if you've got anything remotely resembling a tip or POKE, it should be sent to ZAT at the above address. And please DON'T rip off other people's work, especially mine, otherwise you'll be sorry!

Anyway, see you all next time. RS

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